

Using Divorce Planning Software

By Tom Norton, CPA, CDFA

Having financial information in a format that immediately shows you the result of various offers and proposals is a valuable tool in divorce negotiations. It is also invaluable planning your future.

If you would rather "do it yourself" than hire a financial professional, there is software available for that purpose. I use and recommend [Family Law Software](#). I use the expensive professional version, but for your divorce, you should get the Personal Edition. (At \$179, admittedly it's not cheap. But the return on investment in terms of avoiding mistakes and negotiating a better settlement makes it well worth it.)

Your job is to input the necessary information into the software. The software takes it from there, giving you dozens of reports, tailored to your particular circumstances.

You begin your input with information from your and your spouse's Income and Expense Statements, as well as your Statements of Assets and Liabilities. You'll put in your income, whether from a job or a business, as well as your expenses. Remember to put in your best estimate of your expenses the day after the divorce. What your expenses were last year when you were married may not be accurate for this purpose.

You will also put in your various assets and debts. For your house, make sure you have a recent mortgage statement available, as you'll need to know your interest rate and current balance. This is very important for income tax and net worth calculations.

For the most part, you just follow the prompting of the software. Once everything is input, you can check out the various reports that are available, and see which are most relevant and helpful for you. Usually, the Budget Report and the Summary Totals Spreadsheet are the reports my clients find most helpful.

Remember, the software is a tool you can use during your divorce, but just as important is being able to interpret the information. If you need help with that, find a knowledgeable Certified Divorce Financial Analyst near you.

For more information:

www.FamilyLawSoftware.com

www.institutedfa.com

[Divorce Financial Survival Series](#)